

Beyond Camp Hi-Sierra: Explore the Stanislaus National Forest & Gold Country!

We are so glad you're here! Arriving early? Staying in the area after camp? Here are some great things to do in the area surrounding Camp Hi-Sierra!

Day Trip to Yosemite Valley:

For troops traveling a long distance and arriving Saturday, why not turn your travel day into an extra adventure? YARTS (Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System) offers daily bus service from Sonora directly to Yosemite Valley during the summer!

- The bus ride is approximately 2 hours and 45 minutes each way. YARTS recommends using **Chicken Ranch Casino** as a convenient stop in Sonora (lots of parking and restrooms available), but other Sonora stops exist.
- It's completely feasible to travel to Yosemite, spend 4-5 hours in the park, and be back in Sonora around 7 PM. The bus has a bathroom on board.
- Pricing is very reasonable at **\$22/youth round trip** and **\$44/adult round trip**, and this includes your Yosemite National Park admission. (Check the full 2025 YARTS Hwy 120 Summer Brochure for details: https://www.yarts.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2025_HWY120_Summer_Brochure.pdf)

Pinecrest Lake

Just a short, scenic drive from camp, Pinecrest Lake is a popular Sierra gem. It provides a diverse range of recreational opportunities!

- Swim in the refreshing water or try your hand at paddleboarding, kayaking, boating, or canoeing. You can rent equipment right at the lake.
- Bring your fishing pole and cast a line for rainbow trout!
- Enjoy a scenic picnic on the sandy beach, or catch a summer concert or movie night at the Pinecrest Lake Resort amphitheater.
- Take an easy, flat hike around the picturesque lake loop, perfect for all ages.

Jamestown: Step Back into the Gold Rush!

Travel back in time to California's famous Gold Rush era in charming Jamestown.

- **Ride a Steam Train:** Visit Railtown 1897 State Historic Park and take an authentic ride on a historic steam train. Explore the roundhouse, see movie props, and imagine life over a century ago.
- Try your hand at gold panning at one of the local shops.
- Wander through the historic downtown, explore unique antique shops, and grab a delicious, old-fashioned ice cream cone.

Kennedy Meadows

For the more adventurous families looking for a true high-country experience, head up to Kennedy Meadows.

- Access stunning trails, including sections of the famous Pacific Crest Trail (PCT).
- Try fly fishing in the Stanislaus River, known for its trout.
- Experience the Sierra Nevada backcountry on horseback. Some local pack stations offer guided rides.
- With minimal light pollution, the night sky here is absolutely spectacular for constellation spotting.

Caving Adventures

Discover a cool, subterranean world just a short drive away:

Moaning Caverns - <https://moaningcaverns.com>

Mercer Caverns- <http://mercercaverns.net/>

- Take a guided walking tour through ancient caverns, marveling at incredible stalactites, stalagmites, and other unique rock formations.
- A perfect activity on a hot summer day, as caverns stay cool year-round.
- Many cavern sites offer outdoor gem panning experiences, where kids can sift for fossils and gemstones.
- Some caverns offer optional adventure tours, like rappelling into the main chamber, for older and more daring Scouts (check age/weight limits!).
- Reservations are required